

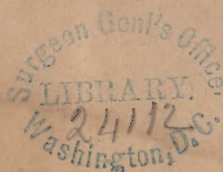
REMARKS
ON THE
CHARACTER AND WRITINGS
OF
HAHNEMANN.

(FROM THE NEW-YORK JOURNAL OF MEDICINE.)

1847, IX, 219-230

✓
BY THE EDITOR.

Lore (C.A.)



NEW-YORK:

J. & H. G. LANGLEY, 5 AMERICAN HOTEL, BARCLAY-STREET,
OPPOSITE ASTOR-HOUSE.

M DCCC XLVII.

REMARKS, ETC.

To arrive at a correct appreciation of Homœopathy, we must study the character of its founder; for in his mind we find its true type. Hahnemann was not destitute of genius, but he was thoroughly imbued with transcendentalism. He was always devoted to theories and speculations, and had no regard whatever for experience or facts, except as they went to support hypothesis. Hence, he says, that the true physician will be cautious how he suffers himself to become attached to any particular remedies, *merely because he has often employed them with success*; and that he will in like manner, also, be cautious how he suffers himself to be prejudiced against remedies, for the opposite reason, that they sometimes fail to succeed, (*Organon*, p. 271). He had, indeed, no correct idea of what ought to be expected of medical science, or in what it really consists. He saw that it was an uncertain science; but he had no proper conception of the causes of this uncertainty, or the proper mode of correcting it. A believer in the perfectibility of human nature, the tendencies of whose mind were to abstract principles in morals and politics, and to mysticism in religion, he thought that medicine ought to rest on an immutable basis, and have within itself the power of rising to perfection. His early life was considerably occupied in the study of chemistry and the natural sciences, and he seems to have concluded, that we ought to expect the same uniform sequence of cause and effect, the same undeviating uniformity of phenomena in medicine, as in the other branches of physical science. We can readily understand how the mere chemist, who always sees the same actions resulting from bringing in contact certain substances, might at length be led to expect that the same uniform results ought to occur in medicine; and that, if they did not, then to conclude, that *that* was a science "falsely so called." He would be very likely to set to work to find out some universal law, like gravitation; some principle which might bind together all known facts, and serve as a basis on which to build a true system. But all this betrays an ignorance of medicine, and a total want of all correct knowledge of what ought to be expected from it. In the first place,

notwithstanding all that has been done, there is great uncertainty in diagnosis—in our knowledge of the character and progress of disease—and it is not to be expected that our *therapia*, or art of cure, will be perfected any faster than our knowledge of these advances.

And then the action of external or internal agents upon the body never can be uniform, owing to the well-known fact, that we are not all constructed exactly alike. As two individuals, exposed to the same causes of disease, as cold, fatigue, etc., will be liable to be attacked by different disorders, so will they be differently affected by the same internal remedies, so that we have, and can have, no confidence approaching that of certainty, that similar treatment will be followed by similar results even in the same disease. The operation of our remedies is modified by constitution, climate, temperament, state of mind, and many other circumstances, which cannot always be accurately appreciated; hence, medicine can never, with man's present organization, attain to Hahnemann's standard, viz., that of a certain science.

Whoever has carefully examined the writings of Hahnemann, will at once perceive, that he constantly violates every rule of philosophical investigation. Instead of pursuing the mode of induction, as laid down by Bacon, he began by inventing the law, *similia similibus curantur*, and then endeavored to find facts to support it. So wedded was he to his theory, that, if opposing facts were brought forward, his only reply would seem to have been, "So much the worse for the facts!" One great source of fallacy in all his reasonings was his *constant mistakes in tracing causation*.

1. In administering medicines to the healthy, for example, he invariably set down all the subsequent phenomena, mental and physical, for days, weeks, and months together, to the article administered. The minutest sensations, even to the faintest moral emotions, were ascribed to the infinitesimal dose of the drug, and no influence was allowed to any other cause whatever.

2. In treating the sick, he always ascribed the recovery to the effect of his medicine; attributing his failures to former allopathic treatment, or to some imaginary cause.

3. He referred the symptoms of disease, also, to some imaginary cause, as *sycosis*, or *itch*, and then assigned to particular articles the power of removing this cause.

4. Hence, he was continually mistaking the nature of diseases, and claiming to have cured maladies which only existed in his own imagination. "*Diseases*," says he, "*are dynamic aberrations, which our spiritual existence undergoes in its mode of feeling and acting—that is to say, immaterial changes in the state of health*, (*Organon*, p. 19).

5. So far from proving his law, "*similia similibus*," to be a *universal fact*, as laid down, Hahnemann admits important exceptions; numerous enough to vitiate it as a general principle, and as a basis on which to erect a new system of medicine. "In urgent and dangerous cases," says he, "or in diseases that have just broken out in persons who were previously in health, such as asphyxia by lightning, suffocation, freezing, drowning, etc., it is proper, in the first instance at least, to re-animate the feeling and irritability by the aid of palliatives, such as slight electric shocks, injections of strong coffee, stimulating odors, warmth,"

etc. Again, he says, "every intelligent physician will *first remove the occasional cause*; then the disease usually ceases of itself," (*Organon*). Hahnemann admits, then, that the *homœopathic law* is not a general one, that it does not apply—1, to cases of *syncope*, which are to be treated by *stimulants*; 2, to cases where life seems almost extinguished, where the *ordinary measures* are to be employed to excite re-action; 3, to cases where offending matter exists in the stomach and intestinal canal, which are to be treated by *emetics* and *cathartics*; 4, to cases of habitual constipation which often require *enemata*; 5, to chronic diseases, for Hahnemann observes, "I have found, after 12 years of diligent research, that chronic diseases, treated homœopathically, even in the best manner, re-appeared, after having been frequently *seemingly* cured, and each year with a perceptible increase in their intensity." In all *chronic* diseases, he states that remedies are to be directed, not against symptoms which really exist, but *against the symptoms of one or other of three imaginary diseases*, ITCH, SYPHILIS, and SYPHILIS, which were supposed to have existed at some previous time; all chronic diseases, then, are exceptions to the law *similia similibus*!

6. Hahnemann not only refers phenomena to fictitious principles, instead of facts, and lays down, as of general application, a rule whose exceptions, according to his own showing, are far more numerous than its applications, but he constantly institutes statements and hypotheses for facts, and puts forth his own opinions, without a shadow of evidence, as established truths.

Such are the principal failings of Hahnemann, as a medical philosopher, but there are grave charges against him as a man of high and honorable bearing, to which we should not here allude, did they not serve to throw light upon his career and his system, and the motives which may have influenced him in its promulgation. The origin and progress of homœopathy can best be traced in the mind of him to whom it owes its birth. In his early professional career (1800), it is admitted that he advertised a new salt, the discovery of which he claimed, and which he offered for sale under the name of *alkali pneum*, at the price of one *louis d'or* (\$4) per ounce. The Society for the Promotion of Natural Sciences, at Berlin, procured an ounce of it from his agent at Leipzig, which was analyzed by Klaproth, and pronounced to be nothing more than *common borax*! Soon after this, Hahnemann advertised an "*infallible preventive of scarlet fever*," as he termed it; the price of which was, also, a *louis d'or*; this was a simple solution of the extract of *belladonna*! It has been proved by Professor Joerg, of Leipzig, that many of the quotations from old medical authors, made by Hahnemann, are false and fictitious! These statements, long since made, have never been refuted; it is admitted that his quackish practices chiefly drove him from Germany, to take up his abode in Paris.

It is abundantly evident that Hahnemann had no correct idea of the mode in which nature cures disease. Indeed, he sometimes denies that nature ever cures, without the aid of homœopathic drugs; and yet he thinks her powers are energetic enough to remove the much stronger disease caused by them! Assuming disease to be *spiritual*, he attempted to find an antidote by spiritualizing matter, and as it was a *bad*, not a *good* spirit, his treatment amounted to nothing more nor

less than sending one evil spirit into the body to chase out another; for we are not to forget it was an application of the *similia similibus* principle. It is a theory which begins and ends with spirits; it is German mysticism reduced to a system; transcendentalism transferred to medicine! The whole doctrine of homœopathy, as laid down in the *Organon*, is but a jumble of contradictions and absurdities. The whole doctrine of dynamization of medicines is contradictory in itself; at war with common sense and the laws of nature. At one time, we are cautioned against the use of dynamizations *too low*, lest they should act *with too much power*, and then he shows how power is developed by trituration and shaking. "Formerly," says he, (*Preface to Chronic Diseases, translated by Hempel, Vol. III. p. 6.*) "when I was in the habit of giving a whole drop of the attenuation, mixed with a little water, I found that *ten shakes* developed the medicinal power of a drug to an *excessive degree*, and I, therefore, substituted two shakes in the place of ten," etc. Again (*loc. cit.*), he says, "In cases where great irritability and extreme weakness went hand in hand, and where *smelling* had to be resorted to, I employed, for that purpose, several vials containing globules of a different potency, the patient smelling of the highest potency, and every succeeding day of a lower potency, either with both nostrils or only with one, *according as I desired to produce a stronger or weaker impression.*" The same contradiction appears in the preface to his work on "*Chronic Diseases*," published in 1828, in which he says, "The power of *small* and *highly-diluted* doses was doubted, their greater fitness for effecting a homœopathic cure, and the higher development of their dynamic action were overlooked, and, despite of the warning trials which enabled me to recommend small doses as the most appropriate for the cure of disease, my faithful assurances and reasonings were disdained, and medical men continued, for years, to jeopardize the lives of their patients by large doses," etc. "What would they have risked, if they had first followed my indications, and had employed small doses! The worst which could have befallen them, was, that *these doses would be of no avail. It was impossible that they should do any harm*"!! (p. 12). Where is potentization here?

The work on chronic diseases, comprising the *materia medica* (pure?) of Hahnemann, is a heterogeneous jumble of crude transcendental imaginings, dignified with the name of *facts*; in which symptoms, observed or fancied in different persons, are intermixed, without distinguishing the dose administered, the order in which the symptoms were manifested; how they were grouped, or succeeded each other, or at what intervals of time they appeared. In short, it is a complete chaos; in which the artificial symptoms said to be produced on the healthy by medicines, are intermixed with those which are said to have been removed by the medicine; both apocryphal in our estimation, and of no more value than the ravings of a madman. We regard Hahnemann as a physician, in the same light that we do Swedenborg as a divine; both were inspired by a species of wild enthusiasm, which enabled them to see things that never existed; and if they did not end their days in a mad-house, it was not because their insanity was doubted, but rather because it was of an inoffensive character, rather calculated to amuse and excite curiosity, than to disturb the peace of the community.

The founder of Homœopathy was born in Saxony, in the year 1755, and received the degree of M.D., at Erlangen; after which he resided for some time at Gommern, where he occupied himself in translating works from the English, French, and Italian languages into German. It is not claimed that he had any medical practice, although he held himself in readiness for the discharge of professional duties; but after his nostrums failed, he abandoned all idea of practice, "because," he said, "it afforded no great principle by which he could, *in all cases*, guide his course." It would not be uncharitable to believe, that he might have been actuated by other motives; for he could not have been ignorant, that the physician has to deal with psychological facts, involving the idea of life, which, constantly varying, cannot be subjected to a system of the same rigid experimentalism as physical phenomena, and cannot, therefore, furnish the same definite laws. In 1790, Hahnemann claims to have discovered the *similia similibus* principle, while translating Collins' "Materia Medica," by experimenting on himself, with cinchona bark, which, he says, produced all the symptoms of intermittent fever; although similar trials since made with the same medicine have uniformly failed in causing the same results. In 1796, he published his first dissertation on homœopathy in Hufeland's Journal. In 1805, he brought out a treatise on the virtues of medicines, and in 1810, the *Organon* appeared. In 1811, he commenced to teach his system in Leipsic, and is said to have performed the experiments on himself and pupils, which formed the basis of the "Materia Medica Pura," which appeared during the same year. Let it be borne in mind, that Hahnemann claimed to have discovered in homœopathy an infallible method of cure, applicable to all cases, and never failing to eradicate disease. Now turn we to his work on "Chronic Diseases," (translated by Dr. Hempel, New York, 1845, Vol. I. p. 18,) and one of his latest productions.

Here Hahnemann acknowledges the complete failure of homœopathy in the treatment of chronic maladies. "First," he says, "the treatment was satisfactory, then it became less favorable, and finally hopeless. *Despite of these failures*, the doctrine itself has been, and will ever be, founded upon the unshakable pillars of truth. *Facts* have confirmed its infallibility!"

"Why," he asks, "should homœopathy have failed *in thousands of cases*, to cure such chronic ailments thoroughly and forever. These failures were perhaps owing to the small number of the homœopathic medicines, whose pure action had been ascertained. The followers of homœopathy were satisfied with this excuse. But the founder of homœopathy rejected it as a mere subterfuge. For the yearly increase of powerful homœopathic remedies left the treatment of chronic non-venereal diseases in the dark, whereas, acute diseases, *provided they were not fatal from their beginning*, were not only considerably alleviated by correctly-chosen homœopathic remedies, but even *promptly and thoroughly cured by the vis medicatrix of the organism.*" (p. 18.)

"Why," he asks, "should this vis medicatrix of the organism, whose object is to restore the integrity of the organism, and to be indefatigably active in completing the recovery from virulent acute diseases, have been insufficient to effect a durable cure of those chronic maladies, even when it was aided by those homœopathic remedies, the symptoms of which corresponded most accurately to those of the dis-

ease?" In trying to answer this question, H. states that he was led to the discovery of the nature of chronic diseases, which *he kept secret* till the year 1827, when he communicated it to two of his disciples. "I did so," he says, "in order to avoid the danger of seeing my discoveries lost to mankind." He was then in the 73d year of his age! This discovery consisted in ascertaining (?) that 7-8ths of all chronic maladies are caused by *psora*, or *itch*, and the remaining 1-8th by *syphilis* or *sycosis*, (wart-disease,) and of course that the treatment was to be directed against these imaginary and latent diseases, and not the apparent disease, or that which prevailed under a disguised livery. "This *psora*," says Hahnemann, "is the oldest, most universal, and most pernicious chronic miasmatic disease. For thousands of years it has disfigured and tortured mankind, and during the last centuries, it has become the cause of those thousands of incredibly different, acute as well as chronic, non-venereal diseases, with which the civilized portion of mankind becomes more and more infected upon the whole inhabited globe." p. 23. Again, "All natural chronic ailments now existing, which have not been produced by bad medical treatment, or by the fumes of quicksilver, lead, arsenic, etc., in the work-shops, and which we find arrayed in the usual treatises on pathology as distinctly-bounded and separately-named diseases, originate in *psora*, as their fountain head," (*Loc. cit.*) We leave these quotations without comment, adding one more jewel as a pendant to the string. "Careful observations, comparisons and experiments, in latter years, have revealed to me the fact, that the tedious ailments of both the body *and the soul*, which differ so much from each other in their principal symptoms, as well as in the different patients, are all of them nothing but partial manifestations of one primitive chronic psoric miasm, in which they all originate, and whose innumerable symptoms form but one integral disease; and ought, therefore, to be regarded and treated as parts of one and the same disturbance. *Of this nature are the great epidemic typhus fevers, like that of 1813*" (p. 22.)

A proneness to secrecy and dissimulation were prominent traits in the character of Hahnemann; disguise and concealment entered into all his plans, and influenced all his actions. From the time that he advertised his grand panacea, *borax*, to the very last years of his life, when he confessed that his system of practice had been an entire failure, so far as the treatment of chronic diseases was concerned, and that he had kept to himself for nearly 30 years the true theory and mode of curing this class of disorders, during all this long period he had been openly proclaiming the success of his system, *as set forth*, and its superiority over all others, in the management of every class of affections; while, according to his own late confession, he was conscious all the time it was a perfect failure. We do not wish to judge any man uncharitably, but we are directed by high authority to judge a tree by its fruits, and to this test we wish to bring the founder of homœopathy. We cannot reconcile, we repeat, with honesty of purpose or even common humanity, this long and cruel silence regarding the success of his practice, while his deluded followers were trusting to it as their sheet-anchor, to the neglect of known established methods of cure. It is dreadful to contemplate the number of lives which were thus sacrificed to pride of opinion, and obstinacy of will;—lives hardly atoned for by late and reluctant confession, at a time when death

seemed staring him in the face. Throughout his works, wherein are recorded his experiments with drugs on himself or others, we never find him stating the dose, or the intervals of administration; so that it is impossible to verify his experiments if we would. He only directs to "dynamize" one drop, or one grain of the medicine, but how much he used in his experiments he leaves us to guess. Under *Lycopodium* he speaks of the "wonderful medicinal properties, which can only be disclosed by trituration and succussion;"* and under "*Salt*" he speaks of the peculiar processes of trituration and succussion bringing to light a new world of powers, which Nature keeps latent in crude substances!"

We infer, of course, from these and other statements, that Hahnemann's experiments were performed with the little doses, although the symptoms, as recorded, are of the most painful and aggravated character, and such as the crude articles never would have produced; yet he always contended, notwithstanding his statements that trituration and comminution developed such "wonderful power," that the high dilutions were *infinitely safer*, and that "if they did no good, they would do no harm." He acknowledges that he had "killed" patients with drugs in their ordinary officinal forms, but had never done any injury with his potentizations! and such *hocus pocus* as this he expected his purblind followers to swallow, as they did his confessions; and if the truth were known, his practice would give the lie to his pretence, that "latent power" is developed by trituration. When we have swallowed at a time thousands of homœopathic pellets, and tens of thousands of doses of homœopathic dilutions, and when we have offered to swallow with our dinner, by way of *dessert*, all the homœopathic medicines in the city above the third dilution, we have been told that the peculiarity of these remedies is not to operate upon the healthy, but only on individuals whose disease bears to them a certain specific relation and affinity; and when we have asked these same persons if Hahnemann's experiments were not made with the infinitesimals, or high dilutions, the answer has been—*nothing*! Let them learn of Jahr, (Am. Ed. p. 4, 1838,) "Every cure, and for the most part, the symptoms produced on healthy persons, have been effected with what are called the *little doses*."

We have always been puzzled to understand how it was that medicines made so "tremendously potent" by trituration, are safer than our doses of the same substance for which we claim no such power. How it is that such powerful agents have no sensible effect on a healthy man, when doses of the same substance, whose powers have not been so prodigiously developed, act with admitted power. And especially have we wondered why, if homœopathic remedies are so "tremendously potent," it is necessary to suppose the body, in disease, to be specially susceptible to them, in order to account for their action at all, when the *same* substances, given in the *same* diseases, in doses not possessing this potency, act so powerfully as to augment the disease, and even, in some cases, cause death!

But Hahnemann explains the difficulty; the high "potentizations" are, after all, absolutely inert, and if they do no good, they can never

* Chronic Diseases, Am. Ed., Vol. IV., p. 81.

do any harm. A careful examination of Hahnemann's works, then, compels us to believe that he was artful, disingenuous, and insincere. We doubt very much whether he himself believed in his own doctrines for years after they were first broached, and such was the opinion of some of his own intimate friends. His want of success in obtaining business in the treatment of disease, as well as the merited discipline to which he had been subjected, for violating the laws of his country, relating to the practice of medicine, had embittered his feelings against the regular profession, and against its modes of cure, and led him to invent some antagonist system or school, which would present an opposing front to those whom he regarded as his enemies. Some of his friends, however, who judged him more leniently, believed that his object in inventing his theory of *similia similibus* was, that it lessened the evils which he saw to arise from excessive medication; and if adopted, would leave the cure in the hands of Nature, in whose restorative energies he is said, by them, to have had the most unlimited confidence. On either supposition, it follows that he was influenced by other motives than a belief in the truth of his doctrines.

We, however, cannot reconcile Hahnemann's conduct and writings with what are generally regarded by the world as candor and honesty; and we will illustrate what we mean by his statements in relation to the part which nature plays in the cure of disease. It is self-evident, that to establish the doctrine that disease can only be cured by the administration of something which causes in health symptoms analagous to those of the disease itself, it is necessary to deny that *nature herself* ever cures disease; this Hahnemann did in all his earlier writings. Thus, in the "Organon," (Am. Trans., p. 30,) he says, "Allopathic physicians never discovered that all those pretended crises, those evacuations and derivations produced by nature, abandoned to her own exertions, *procure palliative relief for a short time only*, and that far from contributing towards a real cure, they on the contrary aggravate the internal primitive evil, by consuming the strength and the juices. No ONE HAS EVER SEEN THOSE EFFORTS OF SIMPLE NATURE EFFECT THE DURABLE RECOVERY OF A PATIENT."!! In another place (p. 30,) he calls the vital force "unintelligent, inconsiderate, and tending towards anything but a real cure," on page 31, he denies that "efforts of pure nature" are truly "salutary." In severe acute diseases, the efforts of nature he says "are never successful," and in those of a mild form, "only crowned with partial success," (p. 26,) again "the miserable and very imperfect attempts which the vital powers make to assist themselves in acute diseases, is a spectacle that ought to excite man to use all the resources of his learning and wisdom, to put an end by a real cure to this torment which nature herself inflicts," (p. 26. Loc. cit.) on the other hand, in the preface to his 4th volume, on "Chronic Diseases," he admits that the vital powers cure diseases unassisted by remedial agents, but not without expending a portion of both the fluids and solids of our organism (p. 2,) "we know," he remarks, "with certainty, that the vital powers do not accomplish a victory over disease in a *direct manner*, or without making great sacrifices." He then goes on to say, that though it is necessary "to assist and direct these vital forces by a properly-selected homœopathic agent," yet *it is, nevertheless, these forces that conquer!*" Here then we have an admission that nature is adequate to cure disease, although she finds it much easier when

"aided by a homœopathic drug." But how easier? Let our author explain. "By *magnifying* ever so little the enemy by which the vital forces are assailed, which we accomplish by aiding the vital forces by an artificially morbid influence closely resembling the disease, we induce those forces, as from an instinct of self-preservation, gradually to unfold all their energies, until they become powerful enough to control the disease; the vital forces are then restored to the regulation of the animal functions, whereas the artificial medicinal disease disappears of itself, so soon as we discontinue the use of those agents by which it had been established in the organism." To say nothing of this singular mode of aiding nature by *magnifying* the enemy by which she is assailed, as if she could throw off a larger burden easier than a smaller one, the reader will perceive the downright contradiction of the views previously advanced, which we leave to be explained on any theory which appears most consistent.

We have said that the law "*similia similibus curantur*" is a pure fiction, founded on assumption and unsustained by facts. Converts to homœopathy take its truth for granted without proof, and often without examination, simply because, so far as we can see, Hahnemann has promulgated it. Although the science of medicine has always been founded on experience and observation, yet we are to believe that not a scintillation of medical truth dawned in the human mind relative to the proper mode of treating and curing disease, till the genius of Hahnemann rose upon the world to dim the pale twilight of Hippocrates, Celsus, Galen, Sydenham, Berhaave and Haller. What evidence has he given us of candor, love of truth, and devotion to science? Is it in the sale of his secret nostrums, his worthless panaceas, and scarlatina preventives, or his insufferable vanity, which led him to denounce the great lights in medicine of every age, and Paracelsus-like, boast that he embodied all wisdom and medical science in himself? It is confessed that Hahnemann had tried but very few, if any experiments, when he announced the *universality of the homœopathic law*. He had not even applied it in the treatment of a single disease at the time of its announcement, but arrived at it, as he acknowledged, chiefly from noticing the effects of a single medicine on himself, viz., *quinine*. From that time until the appearance of the "*Organon*," he was engaged, not in applying his principle in the treatment of disease, but in experimenting with drugs in infinitesimal doses on himself and his students. The "*Materia Medica Pura*," (Part 1st,) appeared in 1811, contained the results of these experiments, not one of which, we feel confident in saying, had been verified either by himself or any one else at the bed-side. That these effects were purely *imaginary*, we also feel assured, inasmuch as those described as resulting from certain agents, as *charcoal, salt, lime*, etc., not only differ *in toto* from any effects ever before or since observed from the same articles, although some of them have been in daily use from time immemorial, but they differ entirely from those witnessed by Joerg and his company of experimenters, when the same medicines were taken in appreciable doses. We have besides, again and again, taken them ourselves, and given them to others without ever observing the slightest effect. What evidence, moreover, have the practitioners of this school, in support of the universality and infallibility of this assumed "*law*?" Is it in the success of their practice? Far from it, for, of all modes of treatment, it is well known that the homœopathic

is the most unsatisfactory and unsuccessful. Were it not for the regulated diet, which is usually adjusted according to the most approved rules of ancient and modern writers, and the confidence inspired by unlimited promises, which generally bear an inverse ratio to the performance, homœopathy would never have met with sufficient success as to have gained a single convert, or have acquired even an ephemeral foothold in the community. How then, we ask again, do the disciples of Hahnemann convince themselves of the truth and universality of the law. Now we hesitate not to say, that they take it for granted, not only without evidence, but in the face of thousands of well established facts which prove its falsity. Their love of novelties, of hypotheses, of a grand, though false, generalization, outweighs their love of truth, of induction, of established facts; and in the want of a well-grounded knowledge of physiology, pathology, and therapeutics, they adopt a system at war with all these, with reason, and with common sense. A belief in *Thompsonianism* or ultra Hydropathy does not argue deeper ignorance of the true principles of the healing art, than a belief in homœopathy.

The profession is constantly assailed by the followers of Hahnemann for rejecting his doctrines without subjecting them to trial. Although not true to the extent alleged, we contend that the educated physician is justified in rejecting homœopathy without testing it at the bed-side; and this opinion is founded on the fact, that its doctrines are not only contradictory and at variance with themselves, but self-evident absurdities. If the medical man, who seriously sets about their verification, does not endanger his reputation for soundness of mind, he, at any rate, compromises his character, as a thoroughly-educated physician, and a man of well-balanced intellectual faculties. Besides, it is unnecessary, an act of supererogation, to undertake the establishment of statements, which can be disproved by their opposition to facts already known, as well as their contradiction of one another. What would be thought of a man who should undertake to demonstrate that the three angles of a triangle are greater than two right angles; or that two and two make five; or that a part is greater than the whole? What must be thought of him who believes that a grain of medicine can be so expanded as to fill a space larger than the solar system, and yet that the bulk of a mustard seed retains sufficient power to affect sensibly the animal organism? Can a man believe an absurdity like this, and not need a dose of hellebore? The distance between the earth and the sun is 95,000,000 of miles; twenty homœopathic globules, laid side by side, extend to about an inch, so that 158,000,000,000 such globules would reach from the earth to the sun. But when the 30th (X) dilution is practised, each grain is divided into 100 000 000 000,000,000 000 000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000 000,000 000,000 parts, so that a single grain of any substance, in the 30th dilution, would extend between the earth and the sun, 1,262; 626.262; 626.262; 626 262; 626.262; 626.262; 626,262; 626,262; 626,262 separate times! Can a system of medicine which puts forth such statements as this, be worthy of serious investigation? The medical man who is at all accustomed to examine, weigh, and compare facts, is justified, we say, in rejecting, at once, without examination, a system made up of such gross absurdities and fallacies. He is bound to do it in justice to his own understanding.

One great objection to the ordinary and established system of medicine, among those who adopt the homœopathic doctrine, is, the numerous *theories* that have prevailed from time to time in the medical world. This seems to have been Hahnemann's stumbling-block. But a man must be very ignorant who makes this a reason for rejecting ascertained *facts*. A *theory* is nothing but a *mode of explaining phenomena*; we may adopt one, our neighbor a second, and another person a third, and still all agree as to the *facts* in question. And so it is in medicine. There is a general agreement as to ascertained facts; these have always remained the same from the days of Hippocrates, amidst all the explanations of ingenious theorists. But what do we do, when we adopt homœopathy? Why, nothing more nor less than *deny* well-established facts; for example, that pain is relieved by narcotics; inflammation by cold and bleeding; diarrhœa by astringents, and constipation by laxatives. Constant daily observation and experience are opposed to the fundamental principle of homœopathy. If it be true, then the whole medical world have regarded as *facts* what were not such, and no cures have ever been performed, except upon that principle; and no one has observed correctly but Hahnemann.

Again, we are justified in rejecting homœopathy, without subjecting it to trial, because its recorded results, in relation to the operation of drugs, are opposed to ordinary experience. Take *common salt*, for example. Hahnemann gives us 44 pages of symptoms, many of the most painful and aggravated character, produced, as he says, by infinitesimal doses of this agent, (Chronic Diseases); but though the world has used salt from the days of Adam, no such poisonous effects have been observed to arise from it, till the founder of homœopathy discovered them. Of course, as in all other cases, he gets over the difficulty by attributing them to his "*peculiar processes of trituration and succussion*," which, he says, "*bring to light a new world of powers which nature keeps latent in crude substances*," (Vol. IV., p. 295, Am. ed.). But these results, strange as it may seem, have never been, and never can be, verified, for the good reason, that they are wholly the offspring of his imagination. We may refer to *carbonate of lime*, *charcoal*, *silex*, etc., for examples of a similar kind. In fact, the entire homœopathic materia medica is opposed to reason and the common experience of mankind, and therefore needs no experimental trials to prove its falsity.

The practitioner can never be justified in abandoning methods of treatment, which, in his experience, he has found successful, for new and untried modes; especially when in opposition to reason and observation. The want of success, which converts to homœopathy plead guilty of, during their *allopathic* practice, is not owing to any imperfection in the resources of the art, but to their own ignorance of the proper modes of employing them. Their medical education has been radically deficient, or their minds are incapable of profiting from clinical experience. We know men, who are very learned, so far as a knowledge of the literature of the profession is concerned, but at the bed side they are entirely powerless; they know not how to apply their knowledge; they are always as likely to resort to wrong as to right treatment. It is not strange that such should take refuge in a system which claims to give them an *infallible rule, a law, which falsely claims to be of easy application, and to always lead to successful results*.

We do not believe that any man of a well-constituted mind, whose faculties have been properly cultivated and trained, whose medical education has been conducted as it ought to be, and who has ordinary tact in applying his knowledge in the treatment of the sick; we say, we do not believe, that any such, have ever, for a moment, been led astray by the vagaries of Hahnemann, or can be found enrolled among his disciples. They know that *absolute certainty* is not to be expected in medicine; a science which deals, not with the simple relations of matter, but with organization, ever varying, and governed, in its innumerable changes, by a subtle principle; of the laws of action, of which we are, necessarily, to a great extent ignorant, and whose existence, even, we recognize only by its effects. They see in it the "*certainty of probability*," as Cabanis calls it; the same certainty which attaches to the political and moral sciences; which encourages the agriculturist to plow, and sow his seed, and the mariner to push out boldly into the trackless ocean. Because unforeseen occurrences may arise, to defeat the best conceived plans, are we to conclude that chance and haphazard enterprises are, therefore, best? The influences which affect the body, are as much beyond the control of the physician, as those on which the produce of the earth depends; and that physician who, because absolute certainty is not attainable, rejects the experience of the past, and the accumulated facts of former ages, would be equally wise with the farmer, who should, for the same reason, reject the facts and results of agricultural science.

We have proved that homœopathy fulfils none of the conditions of an inductive science; but what are its results, when brought to the test of clinical experience? Absolute failure. Is there such a person, at the present day, as a pure practitioner of homœopathy, as its rules and principles are laid down by Hahnemann, confining himself solely to *infinitesimals*, and high "dynamizations?" Is there one, who does not, occasionally, give medicines in ordinary, or appreciable, or *poisonous* doses, or who does not, at times, resort to the allopathic methods, the "*contraria contrariis*" rule of proceeding? We trow not. Have the practitioners of this school found that certainty in results, that universality of the homœopathic law, boasted of by Hahnemann, which is to serve as the polar star to guide them in the path of cure? From the honest and the conscientious, there can be but one reply.

Homœopathy, however, has not been productive of unmixed evil; for it has taught us the wonderfully restorative powers of Nature, when aided by the enforcement of rigid dietetic rules; and it has thus lessened the amount of active medicines given. Assuming, as a basis, a hypothetical fact, which later experiments have disproved, proceeding on analogies which are dissimilar, involving contradictions irreconcilable, homœopathy has, at every stage of its progress, made war upon common sense, drawn largely upon human credulity, violated all the rules of philosophy, and has now settled down into that slough of contempt, from which its ablest advocates can never succeed in elevating it.

"*Requiescat in pace!*"

